

## SHORTENING AND COMBINING OF SALAH DURING TRAVEL

Muhammad Nabeel Musharraf  
Australian Islamic Library

### ABSTRACT:

This paper is a translation and commentary of an excerpt taken from “A Summary of Islamic Jurisprudence” by Sheikh Salih Al-Fawzan, Vol 1, pg 238 – 241. Selected excerpt summarises key fiqh considerations related to Salah during travel, including: ‘what makes a person traveller from Shariah point of view’, ‘how to do taqseer (shortening of prayers)’, ‘combining prayers’, ‘combined prayer in Arafah’ and other related matters. Explanation of important points in commentary has been based on works from renowned scholars. The scope of this paper does not cover all the matters of fiqh related Salah during travel (e.g. praying in aircraft, train, car etc.) as the key focus for this paper is shortening and combining of Salah in line with Quranic text and prophetic traditions.

### INTRODUCTION

“One of the five main principles upon which Islamic law is based (i.e., the Legal Maxims, or al-Qawā'id al-Fiqhiyya) is: “Difficulty begets ease” (al-mashaqqā tajlib al-taysīr). This principle is manifested throughout all of the rules of fiqh, and in particular that of travel (safar). A traveller may shorten the prayers (qasr), combine them (jam'), and be legally permitted to break the fast of Ramadan (fiṭr).”(Yasir Qadhi, 2011)

It is very unfortunate that many Muslims today are unaware of the concessions and bounties provided to us by Allah SWT. The following hadith from Musnad Ahmed highlights the importance of knowing these concessions and using them: Ibn Umar R.A. reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “Verily, Allah loves for you to take his concessions, just as he dislikes you to be disobedient.” (Musnad Ahmad 5832, Grade: Sahih according to Sheikh Al-Albani). In this paper, we have provided a brief commentary on an excerpt related to ‘Salah for Travellers’, written by Sheikh Saleh Al-Fawzan, to clarify the concessions provided by Allah SWT in this regard and relevant matters of fiqh.

Important Point: It is adequately explained by scholars that there can be more than one correct opinion in the matters of Fiqh (unlike Aqeedah where there is no room for difference of opinion on core beliefs). Authentic scholars and Imams do not present their opinions without having their base in *Adillah tafseeliya* from the Shariah sources (Musharraf, 2015). Accordingly, in the matter of fiqh related to Salah for travellers also, there is a difference of opinion on some matters which are based on the way mujtahidoon have interpreted relevant evidences from Quran and Sunnah. We should, therefore, respect the various views held by scholars and understand, as explained above, that there may be more than one accepted or correct ways of performing an act of worship in line with Shariah texts.

### TEXT AND COMMENTARY:

**Permissibility to shorten the prayer:**

A traveller is one of the excused persons for it is permissible for him to shorten the prayer consisting of four rak'ahs (units of prayer) to only two rak'ahs as stated in the Noble Qur'an, the Sunnah (Prophetic Tradition), and the consensus of Muslim scholars. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

"And when you travel throughout the land, there is no blame upon you for the shortening prayer ..."  
(Qur'an: An-Nisa:101)<sup>1</sup>

#### Preference for shortening the prayer in travel:

Moreover, the Prophet (Peace be upon him) performed only shortened prayers on his journeys [1]. Furthermore, on journeys, shortening the prayer is better than completing it according to the majority of scholars<sup>2</sup>. It is narrated in the Two Sahihs that Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said:

---

<sup>1</sup> This verse was revealed for the scenarios faced by Muslims battlefield at that time and provides guidance for similar situations. There are additional concessions available in case such case e.g. facing any direction, moving during Salah etc. as explained by Syed Abul Aala Maudodi in Tafheem ul Quran (Syed Abul Aala Maudodi, 1972).

He further explains:

Syed Abul Aala Maudodi explains:

"The Zahirites and the Kharijites interpret this verse to mean that reduction in the Salat may be made only during state of war and that reduction in a journey during peace time is against the Qur'an. But we learn from an authentic Tradition that once when Hadrat Umar presented the same objection before the Holy Prophet, he answered, "The concession of 'reduction' is a bounty from Allah; therefore, enjoy it". This is a well-known fact that the Holy Prophet availed of the concession in every journey both during war time and during peace time". (Syed Abul Aala Maudodi, 1972)

With regards to shortening of prayer, Maulana Maudodi explains:

"Some of the Imams have interpreted words "there is no harm" to mean that "reduction in the Prayer" is not obligatory but merely optional. One may make use of the permission and shorten his Salat or may not. Imam Shafi'i holds the same view, though he considers it better to shorten it. He is of the opinion that one who does not make use of the "reduction", gives up the higher thing and adopts a lower thing. Imam Ahmad is of the opinion that although "reduction" is not obligatory, yet it is improper not to make use of the concession. Imam Abu Hanifah considers "reduction" obligatory and there is also a tradition from Imam Malik to the same effect. All the traditions from the Holy Prophet ﷺ show that in his Journeys he always shortened his Salat and there is no authentic Tradition to show that he ﷺ ever offered four rak'ats on a journey. Ibn Umar says, "During the journeys I accompanied the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Abu Bakr, Umar or Uthman (may Allah be pleased with them all), and I witnessed that they always shortened their Salat and never offered four rak'ats." The same view is also supported by authentic traditions from Ibn Abbas and several other Companions".

<sup>22</sup> When a person is deemed to be a Musaafir (traveller according to Islamic Shariah) it is Waajib (obligatory) to shorten the Prayer.

وَإِذَا صَرَيْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَقْصُرُوا مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ إِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ كَانُوا لَكُمْ عُذُوًّا مُبِينًا

[4:101] When you travel on the earth, there is no sin on you in shortening your Salah, if you fear that the disbelievers would put you in trouble. Surely, the disbelievers are an open enemy for you.

A casual reading of the verse indicates that shortening of prayer must be done due to fear, however Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and Sahaba (RA) shortened prayers with or without fear during travel (*Sunnah method & description of Salah of a Musafir (Traveller)*, 2015).

“When the prayer was enjoined (by Allah), it was two rak’ahs (units of prayer) only (in every prayer) both when in residence or on a journey. Then the prayers performed on journey remained the same, but (the rak’ahs of) the prayer for non-travellers were increased.” [2]<sup>3</sup>

Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

“The prayer performed on journeys is of two rak’ahs. This is the complete prayer without shortening.” [3]

وحدثنا عبد الله بن مسلمة بن قعنب حدثنا عيسى بن حفص بن عاصم بن عمر بن الخطاب عن أبيه قال صحبت ابن عمر في طريق مكة قال فصلينا لنا الظهر ركعتين ثم أقبل وأقبلنا معه حتى جاء رحله وجلس وجلسنا معه فحانت منه التفاتة نحو حيث صلى فرأى ناسا قياما فقال ما يصنع هؤلاء قلت يسبحون قال لو كنت مسبحا لأتممت صلاتي

يا ابن أخي إني صحبت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في السفر فلم يزد على ركعتين حتى قبضه الله وصحبت أبا بكر فلم يزد على ركعتين حتى قبضه الله وصحبت عمر فلم يزد على ركعتين حتى قبضه الله ثم صحبت عثمان فلم يزد على ركعتين حتى قبضه الله وقد قال الله

لقد كان لكم في رسول الله أسوة حسنة

Hafs b. 'Asim (RA) said: I accompanied Ibn 'Umar (RA) on the road to Mecca and he led us in two rak'ahs at the noon prayer, then he went forward and we too went along with him to a place where he alighted, and he sat and we sat along with him, and he cast a glance to the side where he said prayer and he saw people standing and asked: What are they doing? I said: They are engaged in glorifying Allah, offering Sunnah prayer. He said: If I had done so I would have perfected my prayer; O my nephew! I accompanied the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on a journey, and he made no addition to two rak'ahs, till Allah called him. I accompanied Abu Bakr (RA) and he made no addition to two rak'ahs till Allah caused him to die. I accompanied 'Umar (RA) and he made no addition to two rak'ahs till Allah caused him to die. I accompanied 'Uthman (RA) and he made no addition to two rak'ahs, till Allah caused him to die, and Allah has said: "There is a model pattern for you in the Messenger of Allah" (al-Qur'an, xxxiii. 21). [Muslim]

An important point to be noted here is that shortening of prayer is done for Zuhr, Asr and Isha prayers. Fajr and Maghrib prayer are 2 and 3 rak'ahs respectively. In addition to this, Fajr Sunnahs (2 rak'ah) will also need to be offered (Dr. Zakir Naik, 2012).

With regards to offering Sunnah prayers, Syed Abul Aala Maudodi explains:

“There is a difference of opinion as to whether the obligatory parts (fara'id) only are to be offered in a journey or those parts (sunnahs) also that were practised by the Holy Prophet in addition to the former. When on a journey the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to offer without fail two rak'ats in addition to the obligatory rak'ats of Salat-ul-Fajr (Morning Prayers) and three rak'ats of witr with Salat-ul- 'Isha' (Night Prayer). At other times (i.e. other than the two mentioned above), he ﷺ only offered the obligatory parts; there is no proof of his offering the Sunnah parts. He ﷺ, however, used to offer "additional prayers" (nawafil), whenever he got time for these even while he was riding. That is why Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar prohibited the people from offering the sunnahs during a journey except with the Morning Prayer. But the majority of the scholars leave it to the individual's option to offer or not to offer the sunnahs on a journey. The Hanafis are of the opinion that it is better to leave them during the actual journey but one must offer them at a halting place, if one can get the necessary peace of mind.”(Syed Abul Aala Maudodi, 1972)

<sup>3</sup> In another narration, Aishah (RA) said: "The salah was made fard in Makkah in sets of two rak'at. When the Prophet ﷺ came to Medinah, two rak'at were added to each salah except the maghrib salah because it is the witr of the daytime, and the dawn prayer due to its lengthy Qur'anic recital. But if one travels, he performs the original prayer [i.e., only two rak'at]. [Ahmed]

Explaining this, Maulana Ishaq explains that on Mairaj, 11 rak'ahs were prescribed on Muslims (Maulana Ishaq Madni, 2011) which were later increased as mentioned in hadith above.

### When is a person considered to be a traveller?

A Muslim on a journey is to start shortening the prayer as soon as he leaves his town or city as Allah permits the shortening of prayer for those who travel through the land. Before leaving his town, a Muslim is not legally considered a traveller through the land (and hence he is not permitted to shorten the prayer). The Prophet ﷺ (Peace be upon him) used to shorten the prayer as soon as he left his hometown. So, if a person does not travel from the residential land, he is not considered a traveller.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Shortening of the prayers will commence once the person has left the city limits and cease when the person has re-entered the city limits.

حدثنا سليمان بن حرب حدثنا حماد بن زيد عن أيوب عن أبي قلابة عن أنس رضي الله عنه قال صلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بالمدينة الظهر أربعاً والعصر بذي الحليفة ركعتين وسمعتهم يصرخون بهما جميعاً

Narrated Anas (RA): The Prophet (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) offered four Rakat of the Zuhr prayer in Medina and two Rakat of the 'Asr prayer in Dhul-Hulaifa and I heard them (the companions of the Prophet) reciting Talbiya together loudly to the extent of shouting. [Bukhari]

Note: Dhul-Hulaifa is outside of Madinah city limits.

The majority of scholars in Hanafi, Shaf'ae, Maliki and Hanbali Madhab agree that the minimum required distance for a person to be considered a Musaafir (traveller according to Islamic Shariah) is 4 Burud which is equivalent to 16 Farsakh or 48 (Shariah Miles) or 88 Kilometres or 55 miles.

باب في كم يقصر الصلاة وسمى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يوماً وليلة سفراً وكان ابن عمر وابن عباس رضي الله عنهم يقصران ويفطران في أربعة برد وهي ستة عشر فرسخاً

Chapter concerning when to shorten the prayer; The Messenger of Allah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) used to designate a day and a night journey as travel and Ibn Abbas (RA) and Ibn Umar (RA) used to shorten the prayer and open their fast at a journey of 4 Burd and it was 16 Farsakh. [Bukhari]

Ibn Qudama R.A. has argued that even lesser distance than what is described above that may constitute travel, on the strength of Anas's narration that the Prophet would shorten his prayer if he went out for a distance of 5 or, as one of the narrators does not completely remember, 10 miles [8-17 km]. It is narrated by Muslim, Ahmad, and Abu Dawud. Ibn Qudama said (al-Mughni 2:257) that this constitutes enough proof unless there is a consensus to the contrary. Imam Shafi'i fix it at 50 miles [81 km].

It is also to be noted that, Zuhayli mentions in al-Fiqh al-Islami wa adillatuh does not mention staying in your parents' house, nor does he mention staying in your town of birth, as criteria that cancel one's traveller-status in any school.

Someone said: "The shaf'i opinion is that you are not a traveller once you enter your town of BIRTH, not necessarily your parents' house."

But the words "town of birth" in the sentence above are a mistranslation of the Arabic "watan" -- place of residence -- where the Shafi'is say: travel ends when he reaches his watan. Lisan al-`arab defines watan as: al-manzilu tuqimu bihi, "the place where you reside." So the sense is not that the trip ends when one reaches one's place of birth (as he may have emigrated from it and so he may be a traveller when visiting it again), but only when one reaches one's hometown where he currently resides. That is what you will find in the Shafi'i manual Reliance of the Traveller (p. 192 f15.7) and that is what Zuhayli has also (2:330) for the Shafi'i stipulation, respectively:

wa yantahi bi wusulihi ila watanihi (Reliance)

"It ends when he reaches his hometown."

wa qala al-shafi'iyya... yantahi al-safaru bi wusulihi sur watanihi aw `umranihi (Zuhayli)

The Shafi'i is said: travel terminates upon his reaching the precinct-wall of his hometown or its constructions.

Among what cancels the traveller-status is the intention to stay at the place of arrival for a period of fifteen days or more [Hanafi school] or four days or more [Malikis and Shafi'is], or more than four days [Hanbalis], while Malikis and Hanbalis also stipulate "or more than twenty rak'at of prayer in total." (Zuhayli 2:326-327). One does not count the day of arrival nor the day of departure.

Sheikh Salman al-Oadah explains it as follows (Sheikh Salman al-Oadah, 2004):

"There is considerable scholarly disagreement on this matter. Scholars have offered a number of different opinions about the maximum period of residence before a person ceases being considered a traveller and must perform his prayers in their full form. Opinions vary from three days to four, to seven, to ten, to fifteen, to seventeen, to nineteen, and to twenty days.

Other scholars, however, have said that the period residence for a traveller cannot be determined in days. What must be taken into consideration are the circumstances that the person is in.

Those who set a certain maximum period for travel - the majority of scholars, who nevertheless disagree on the number of days - have in their favor a precise and tidy ruling.

Those who do not set a fixed period have the evidence in their favour, since there is no clear-cut hadith evidence establishing a maximum time limit. However, a problem arises because different people have different ideas of how travel and residency should customarily be defined. Some have taken the idea so far that they considered all sorts of people as travellers - students, ambassadors, and even some workers staying abroad for months and years on end. This is undoubtedly a problem.

I support the opinion that prevailing custom should be used to define who is a traveller and who is a resident. Whenever a term is used in Islamic Law without being defined, then its precise definition is to be determined by custom.

Therefore, if a person is moving about and not staying in one place for a long period of time, then he is a traveller and he will shorten his prayers as long as he is in such a state, unless he prays in congregation with others. He is also permitted to break his fast in Ramadan.

People, like students, who stay in one place for months or years on end have to consider themselves as residents, since they are virtually like the residents of the place where they are staying. They rent apartments on yearly leases and do everything else that a resident does. Students and ambassadors are not people who move frequently and have the intention of returning to their homes or going somewhere else at any time.

It is worth saying that this is a matter of scholarly disagreement, so no one should find fault with what one's fellow Muslims choose to follow in this matter."

Dr. Yasir Qadhi has summarized various opinions about the distance that makes one a 'traveller' according to Shariah (Yasir Qadhi, 2011):

"

#### **First Opinion: A three-day journey**

What is meant by a 'three-day journey' is the distance that a traveller on a camel of average speed would traverse in three complete days.

This is the position of the Companion Ibn Mas'ūd, some of the famous scholars of Kufa such as al-Sha'bī (d. 105/723) and al-Nakha'ī (d. 96/714), and the standard position of the Ḥanafī school of law.

They based this figure on the famous hadith in which the Prophet ﷺ said, “It is not allowed for a woman who believes in Allah and the Last Day that she travel for a distance of three days without her father, son, husband, brother or any maḥram” [Reported by Muslim]. They reasoned from this hadith that the Prophet called the distance of 'three days' a 'travel', hence this can be taken as a definition for what constitutes traveling.

Another evidence that they used was the hadith pertaining to wiping over the socks, in which the Prophet ﷺ “...allowed a traveller to wipe over his socks for a period of three days and nights” [Reported by Muslim]. The Ḥanafīs reasoned that since the Prophet ﷺ set a particular time limit in place, this demonstrates that anyone traveling a distance less than a three-day journey would not be allowed to wipe over his socks, which would then imply that he would not be a traveller.

### **Second Opinion: A two-day journey**

This is the famous opinion of the Ḥanbalīs, Shāf'īs and Mālikīs (note that even within these schools there are other opinions as well, as shall be pointed out in the next section). This opinion has also been reported from Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn 'Umar, Ibn Shihāb al-Duhrī (d. 129/746), and others. From amongst the modern scholars, this is the opinion of Ibn Baz (d. 1999) and the fatwa of the Permanent Committee of Scholars of Saudi Arabia. It is claimed that this is the majority opinion of the classical scholars of Islam.

Their evidence is the fact that the Prophet ﷺ said, “It is not allowed for a woman who believes in Allah and the Last Day that she travels for a distance of two days without a maḥram” [Reported by Muslim]. They also used the action of Ibn 'Umar as an evidence, for it is reported that he would shorten his prayers if he travelled the distance of four barīds (i.e., two days, as we shall discuss later in this article) [Reported by imam Malik in his Muwaṭṭa].

### **Third Opinion: A one-day journey:**

This was the opinion of imam al-Bukharī (d. 256/869) which he explicitly mentions in his Ṣaḥīḥ. It has also been attributed as a second opinion within the three schools of the last opinion (viz., the Ḥanbalīs, Shāf'īs and Mālikīs). [It will be explained later why this second opinion for these three schools is not in essence different from their first one].

The famous scholar of Syria, al-Awzā'ī (d. 151/768), said, “This is the opinion of the majority of scholars, and we hold it as well.” Amongst the modern scholars, this is the opinion of our teacher Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Mukhtār al-Shanqīṭī.

Their evidence for this is the fact that the Prophet ﷺ said, “It is not allowed for a woman who believes in Allah and the Last Day that she travels for a distance of one day without a maḥram” [Reported by al-Bukhārī]. Al-Bukhārī commented on this hadith by saying, “So it is clear that the Prophet called [the traveling of] one day and night a 'travel.'”

They also use as evidence the statement of Ibn 'Abbās, when he was asked by a person residing in Mecca, “Should I shorten when I go to Mina or Arafat?” He said, “No! But if you go to Taif, or Jeddah, or travel an entire day's journey, then do so. But if you travel less than that, then do not shorten.” Therefore, he expressed 'an entire day's journey' as being the minimal limit for shortening the prayers.

### **Fourth Opinion: It is not defined by distance but by experience**

What is meant by this opinion is that a journey is not defined by how much one has traveled but by what one does and how one prepares for it. According to this opinion, a 'journey' is not a particular distance as much as it is a physical and psychological experience.

This is the opinion of Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456/1064) (although he placed a minimum of 'one mile'), Ibn Qudama (d. 610/1213), Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1327), Ibn al-Qayyim (d. 756/1355), al-Ṣan'ānī (d. 1182/1768), al-Shawkanī (d.

## Does frequency of travel impact shortening:

1250/1834), and others. It has been interpreted to be the opinion of Ibn Mas'ūd, 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, and Ibn Sirīn. In fact, there is an explicit statement from Ibn Sirīn which shows that this opinion might have been more prevalent in the past, for he states, "They used to say that a travel in which one may shorten the prayer is a journey in which one takes provisions and baggage." Amongst the modern scholars, it is the opinion of Ibn 'Uthaymīn (d. 2000) and Ibn Jibrīn (d. 2010).

Their evidence is the lack of any Scriptural evidence that defines 'travel', and hence the necessity of resorting to what is culturally understood to be 'travel'.

Ibn Taymiyya was perhaps the most vocal proponent of this opinion. He disagreed with any specific distance that other scholars sought to derive. According to him, there is no explicit evidence from the Qur'an, Sunnah, language or custom of that generation that would be binding on later Muslims. He views the distances that the legal schools and other scholars adopted as having been resorted to because these scholars did not find anything more explicit to demarcate the distance required to be considered a 'traveller'. In fact, all three of the previous opinions use the same basic hadith that prevents women from traveling without a male companion – yet, as is obvious, each hadith uses a different limit. This in itself shows that the intention of the hadith is not to define the distance of what constitutes 'travel'.

Ibn Taymiyya writes,

So demarcating a specific distance does not have any basis in the Shariah, or in the language, or in the intellect. Most people, in fact, do not know the distance of the earth, so it is not allowed to link something that the average Muslim is in need of (i.e., when to shorten the prayer) with something that he does not know (i.e., how much he has travelled). No one measured the earth during the time of the Prophet, nor did the Prophet himself put limits, neither in mils nor in farāsikh (units of measurement). And a person might leave his village to go to the desert in order to collect wood, and he leaves for two or three days, and he will be a traveller, even though the distance might be less than a mile! In contrast to this, another person might go [a longer distance] and come back the same day, and he will not be a traveller. This is because the first person will take provision for the journey, and bags [with his necessities], whereas the second person will not. Therefore, even a near distance can be considered a 'travel' if someone stays for a period of time, and a longer distance will not be considered a travel if a person stays for a short period. A 'travel' is therefore defined by the actions that are required in order for that journey to be called 'traveling'... and this is a matter that people recognize by their own customs.

Ibn Taymiyya did, however, place a condition that such a travel be considered a travel according to one's custom, such that a person would prepare for a journey and travel into the wilderness (meaning, an uninhabited area). Hence, if a person visited an outlying district of a city (in Ibn Taymiyya's explicit example, if a person living in Damascus visited a small population outside of Damascus), even if this distance was considered large, this would not constitute travel, as this is not considered 'traveling' for a person in this situation.

Therefore, according to Ibn Taymiyya, a 'travel' is not merely a distance but also a frame of mind. Someone who leaves his house, intending to return the same evening, is not a traveller, even if (as in our times) he travels to another country and then returns. Ibn 'Uthaymīn also holds the same position.

Ibn Taymiyya also pointed out that this interpretation was in accordance with the very word *safar* in Arabic, because this word indicates 'exposure'. Thus, a woman who exposes her face is called *sāfira*. Therefore, a *safar* would be a journey in which a person 'exposes' himself/herself to the wilderness by abandoning the cities and towns and journeying into an uninhabited area".



A traveller is permitted to shorten the prayer even if he frequently travels, as in the case of a mail carrier or a taxi driver who spends most of his time on the way between towns.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Manner of combining the prayer:**

It is permissible for a traveller to combine:

- The Zuhr prayer and the Asr (Afternoon) prayer at the due time of either of them,
- and, likewise, to combine the Maghrib (sunset) prayer and the Isha (night) prayer at the due time of either of them.

That is because what makes it permissible for the traveller to shorten prayer makes it permissible for him to combine prayers as well.

However, shortening prayer is a temporary permission valid when there is a necessity<sup>6</sup>, as in the case when the traveller is in haste on his journey. Mu'adh (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

"... on the Battle of Tabuk, when the Prophet (Peace be upon him) had gone forth before the Sun passed the meridian, he would delay the Zuhr prayer and combine it with the Asr prayer, performing them together. But when he proceeded after the sun had passed the meridian, he would perform the Zuhr and the Asr prayers ( at the time of the Zuhr ) and then he would proceed. (He acted similarly for the Maghrib prayer). When the sun had set before he proceeded, he would delay the Maghrib prayer and combine it with the Isha prayer, performing them together. But when he proceeded after sunset, he would perform the Isha prayer and the Maghrib prayer at the time of the Maghrib prayer ". ( Related by Ahmad and At-Tirmidhi ) [4]<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> This is a matter where difference of opinion exists. According to Sheikh Assim Al-Hakeem (2011), a preferred opinion is to consider a person who travels daily (or at a very high frequency) to certain distance (as required by conditions of travel), he will not be considered a traveller for the purpose of shortening of Salah and combining them unless a valid reason exists. Similar opinion is explained by Maulana Ishaq Madni (Maulana Ishaq Madni, 2011) who explains that it should be for a purpose other than the normal work routine in a way that family and others also believe that a person has gone on travel and not for regular work (Maulana Ishaq Madni, 2011). A person in such situation should consult scholars for further interpretation of personal circumstances, urf (customs) and other consideration for appropriate advice.

<sup>66</sup> Dr. Zakir Naik explains that it is not a Wajib or Mustahab act but a Mubah (permitted to do with no sin involved in doing so), Wallaho Aalim.(Dr. Zakir Naik, 2012)

<sup>7</sup> Characteristics of combining the prayers:

(NATHIF J. ADAM (1991) explains the characteristics of salah:

"Each prayer will be performed separately.

Only one Prayer Call (ADHAN) shall be made for both prayers but two Second Calls (IQAMAHS) shall be required (i.e. one Second Call (Iqamah) shall be made separately for each prayer). If we may give an example, assuming that a traveller wishes to combine Dhuhr and Asr prayers by bringing the Asr prayer forward to the time of the Dhuhr prayer, the person would proceed as follows:

- The person would first come up with the Call for prayer "Adhaan" intending it for both the two prayers.
- The person would then come up with the second call "Iqamah" for the Dhuhr prayer.
- The person would then perform the Dhuhr prayer shortening it to two rakaats only.



### **Prayer during rest breaks in travel:**

When a traveller stops on his journey, to take a rest, it is better for him to perform each prayer shortened at its due time, not to combine prayers. If it is difficult for a Muslim patient to perform each prayer at its due time, then he is permitted to combine the Zuhr prayer and the Asr prayer (at the due time of either of them), and to combine the Maghrib prayer and the Isha prayer (at the due time of either of them).

Shaykhul – Islam Ibn Taymiyah said:

“Allah has ordained shortening of prayer to remove difficulties and make things easy for the Muslim nation. So, a Muslim is permitted to combine prayers when necessary. All hadiths (related to this matter) imply that it is permissible to combine two prayers at the due time of either of them in order to remove any possible hardship caused to the Prophet’s nation. Thus, it is permissible to combine prayers if it is to cause hardship if not done. This proves that it is permissible with greater reason for a Muslim patient to combine (two) prayers at the due time of either of them as long as it is difficult for him to perform each prayer at its due time.” [5]

### **Prayer of Patients:**

Ibn Taymiyah also said:

” Patients can combine the prayer according to the Sunnah for it is narrated in two hadiths that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) ordered a mustahadah [6] to combine the prayer. “[7]

By means of analogical deduction with the case a mustahadah, the combining of prayer is permitted for every Muslim who cannot purify for every prayer, such as those inflicted with enuresis, a continuously bleeding wound, or a permanent nosebleed. The Prophet ( Peace be upon him ) said to Hamnah Bint Jahsh when she asked him about istihadah [8] (vaginal bleeding other than menstruation ):

“...But if you are strong enough to delay the Zuhr prayer and advance the Asr prayer ,to wash, and then combine the Zuhr and the Asr prayers; (and ) to delay the Maghrib prayer and advance the Isha prayer, to wash, and then combine the two prayers, do so .”

(Related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and At-Tirmidhi and deemed Sahih ( authentic) by the latter ) [9]

- 
- After completing the Dhuhr prayer, the person stands up and makes another second call "Iqamah" for the Asr prayer.
  - The person would then perform the Asr prayer also shortened to two rakaats only”.

Note: A traveller may lead the prayer as an "IMAM" of the residents of the place he is visiting. And in such a case, he (being an Imam), may perform only two rakaats for the Dhuhr or Asr, and/or Isha prayers while, the residents he is leading, shall upon his completion continue to complete the remaining two rakaats of the respective prayers. However, in such cases, it is desirable that the traveller who may act as an Imam first gives notice to the congregation regarding his position and his intention to shorten his prayer so that the congregation continues to complete the prayer.

On the other hand, if the traveller has to pray behind an Imam who is a resident of the place he is visiting, then in such case, the traveller shall pray with the Imam all the four (4) rakaats as usual.”

This opinion is also explained by Dr. Zakir Naik in a QA session (Dr. Zakir Naik, 2012).

### **Prayer during certain weather conditions:**

It is permissible to combine the Maghrib prayer and the Isha prayer, in particular, if there is rain that wets clothes and causes difficulty (for those who go to the mosque). The Prophet (Peace be upon him) combined the Maghrib prayer and the Isha prayer in a rainy night [10], and so did Abu Bakr and Umar afterwards [11].

Shaykul – Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“According to the soundest view of scholars, it is permissible for a Muslim to combine prayers because of mud or strong cold wind in a dark night, even if it has stopped raining. This is more incumbent than performing each prayer at its due time at home. Moreover, to abandon combining congregational prayers in the mosque to perform prayer at home is a bid’ah (a matter innovated in religion) that contradicts the Sunnah (Prophetic tradition). It is an act of the Sunnah to perform the Five (obligatory) prayers in congregation in the mosque, and this is more due, according to the unanimous agreement of Muslims, than performing prayers at home. In addition, congregational prayer combined in the mosque is more due than performing prayers at home individually, according to the unanimous agreement of the scholars who maintain the aforementioned permissibility to combine prayers (due to bad weather), such as Malik, Ash-Shafi’i and Ahmad. [12]

It is better for one permitted to combine prayers to combine them according to what suits his / her situation most.

### **Prayers in Arafah:**

On the day of ‘Arafah, it is better (for the pilgrims) to combine the Zuhr prayer and the Asr prayer at the time of the former [13], but in Muzdalifah, it is better (for the pilgrims) to combine the Maghrib prayer and the Isha prayer at the time of the latter, according to what the Prophet (Peace be upon him) did (in his Hajj)[14]. On the day of Arafah, pilgrims combine the Zuhr and the Asr prayers at the time of the former in order to continue staying at ‘Arafah mount (without interruption), but in Muzdalifah, they combine the Maghrib and the Isha prayers at the time of the latter to continue moving toward Muzdalifah.

In general, it is an act of the Sunnah for pilgrims to combine prayers on the Day of Arafah and in Muzdalifah but in circumstances other than that, it is permissible when necessary. However, when there is no necessity, it is better for a traveller to perform each prayer at its due time. During the days of his Hajj, the Prophet (Peace be upon him) combined prayers only on the Day of ‘Arafah and in Muzdalifah, but he (Peace be upon him) did not combine prayers in Mina because he was to stay there. So the Prophet (Peace be upon him) used to combine prayers only when he was in a hurry on a journey. We invoke Allah to guide us to useful knowledge and good deeds.

### **Notes:**

1. Ad-Dara qutni ( 2275 , 2276) [2/168] and Al-Bayhaqi [3/141]
2. Al-Bukhari (350) [1/601] and Muslim (1568) [3/199]
3. An-Nasai (1419) [2/123] and Ibn Majah (1036) [1/556]
4. Abu Dawud (1208) [2/10] and At-Tirmidhi (552) [2/438]
5. Majmu ‘ul Fatawa (26/64)

6. Mustahadah: A woman in a state of istihadah (i.e a woman having vaginal bleeding other than menstruation)
7. Majmu 'ul Fatawa (24/72,74)
8. Istihadah: Vaginal bleeding other than menstruation
9. Ahmad [6/381,382,439-440] and At-Tirmidhi (128) [1/221]
10. Al-Bukhari (543) and Muslim (705)
11. 'Abdur-Razzaq in his Musannaf (4440) [2/556]
12. Majmu 'ul Fatawa (24/38,29)
13. Muslim (2941) [4/402]
14. Al-Bukhari (1674) [3/660] and Muslim (309) [5/38]

#### References:

1. Dr. Zakir Naik. (2012). Zakir Naik's Answers : While traveling, can we offer qasr salah? India: Peace TV. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTa4PrKLT4o>
2. Maulana Ishaq Madni. (2011). Qasar Namaaz. Fatawa Online Program. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WQwVF3fjz0k>
3. Musharraf, M. N. (2015). The Waraqaat of Imam Al-Haramayn Al-Juwayni, a classical manual of Usul Al Fiqh (Vol. 1). Perth: Australian Islamic Library ([www.australianislamiclibrary.org](http://www.australianislamiclibrary.org)). Retrieved from <https://archive.org/details/AlWaraqaatOfImamAlJuvainiCommentaryByMuhammadNabeelMusharraf>
4. NATHIF J. ADAM. (1991). Kitab us Salaah. Riyadh: Islam Basics. Retrieved from <http://www.islambasics.com/view.php?bkID=68&chapter=1>
5. Shaikh Assim Al Hakeem. (2011). What is Salat ul Qasr - Travelling prayer (Salah). Huda TV. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k0d04M98yNQ>
6. Sheikh Salman al-Oadah. (2004). Maximum number of days of residence for traveler who shortens his prayer (Vol. Published on IslamToday - English (<http://en.islamtoday.net>)). Retrieved from <http://en.islamtoday.net/node/1416>
7. Sunnah method & description of Salah of a Musafir (Traveller). (2015). Central Mosque. Retrieved from <http://www.central-mosque.com/index.php/Acts-of-Worship/sunnah-method-description-of-salah-of-a-musafir-traveller.html>
8. Syed Abul Aala Maudodi. (1972). Tafheem ul Quran (Surah Nisa) (Vols. 1–6). Lahore: Islamic Publications (Pvt) Ltd. Retrieved from <http://www.englishtafsir.com/quran/4/index.html#sdfootnote133sym>
9. Yasir Qadhi. (2011, July 1). The Definition of "Travel" (safir) According to Islamic Law | Part 1. Retrieved from <http://muslimmatters.org/2011/07/01/yasir-qadhi-the-definition-of-%e2%80%98travel%e2%80%99-safir-according-to-islamic-law-part-1/>